



DATE: December 19, 2019

TO: Southern Nevada District Board of Health Members

FROM: Fermin Leguen, MD, MPH, Acting Chief Health Officer

SUBJECT: Chief Health Officer Report

2019-2020 Influenza Season Update

This season, routine annual vaccination is recommended for all people aged 6 months and older who do not have contraindications. Age-appropriate vaccines are available for patients, and packaging information should be reviewed to ensure the most effective immunizations are provided based on age group as well as health status. Additionally, flu vaccine should be emphasized for high-risk groups and their contacts and caregivers. This includes but is not limited to:

- Children aged 6 months through 59 months
- Adults \geq 50 years old
- People with chronic diseases including cardiovascular; pulmonary; renal; hepatic; or metabolic disorders
- People who are immunocompromised due to any cause
- Women who are or will be pregnant during the influenza season

Full recommendations are available on the Health District [website](#).

During week 48 (Nov. 24, 2019 – Nov. 30, 2019), seasonal influenza activity has been elevated in the United States. Locally, influenza-like illness (ILI) was high and widespread. In Clark County, 365 influenza-associated hospitalizations and four influenza-related deaths were reported to the Health District since the beginning of the current influenza season. The proportion of emergency department and urgent care clinic visits for ILI was 9.1 percent in week 48 which was lower than week 47 (10.7 percent). Approximately 57 percent of area ER and urgent care clinic visits for ILI were made by children under 18 years of age. Influenza B was the dominant type circulating.

The Southern Nevada Health District's Office of Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance began its 2019-2020 influenza season surveillance activities on Oct. 1, 2019 and will continue through May 16, 2020. Weekly surveillance reports are available on the Health District website at www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/news-info/statistics-surveillance-reports/influenza-surveillance/.

Severe Respiratory Illness Linked to E-cigarette Use

Beginning December 3, the CDC will only report hospitalized EVALI cases and EVALI deaths regardless of hospitalization status. The CDC has removed non-hospitalized cases from previously reported case counts. As of Dec. 3, 2019, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is reporting that 2,291 cases of e-cigarette, or vaping, product use associated lung injury (EVALI) from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories. Forty-eight deaths have been confirmed in 25 states and the District of Columbia.

The Health District confirmed a fifth case of lung injury associated with e-cigarettes or vaping product use in a Clark County resident. The individual is over the age of 18. The five reported cases in Clark County include one individual under the age of 18 and two under the age of 20. The first case confirmed in Clark County was reported in September 2019. Among Clark County's reported cases, one of the individuals reported using e-cigarettes with nicotine products only. Four of the individuals reported using tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) products, and three of the five also reported using cannabinoid (CBD) oils. All the individuals reported purchasing or acquiring their products from different sources, including friends, retail outlets, and through online purchases.

The CDC has identified vitamin E acetate as the chemical of concern among people with e-cigarette or vaping product use associated lung injury (EVALI). Recent CDC laboratory testing of samples of fluid collected from the lungs of 29 patients with e-cigarette or vaping product use associated lung injury from 10 states found vitamin E acetate in all the fluid samples. Vitamin E acetate is used as an additive in the production of e-cigarettes or vaping products. This was the first time the CDC has detected a potential chemical of concern in biologic samples from patients with these lung injuries.

The Health District and the CDC further recommend these products never be used by youth, young adults, pregnant women, and people who do not currently use tobacco products. People who currently use tobacco products who wish to quit smoking should use FDA-approved therapies. People should not buy any type of e-cigarette or vaping products, particularly those containing THC from informal sources such as friends, or family, or in-person or online dealers. Devices and substances should not be modified or used in ways that are not intended by the manufacturer, including products purchased through retail establishments. Nevada residents, ages 13 and older who are seeking help quitting tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, can contact the Nevada Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-855-DÉJELO-YA (1-855-335-3569) from a Nevada area code.

Up to date information on the outbreak is available on the CDC [website](#).

Federally Qualified Health Center

Since receiving the New Access Point grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to facilitate the implementation of a Federally Qualified Health Care Center (FQHC), Health District staff members have been working on the implementation of HRSA requirements for the operation of Community Health centers. Health District representatives have attended the FQHC orientation provided by HRSA

in Washington, D.C., received a Technical Assistance Visit by the agency, and are preparing for the Operational Assistance Visit in early 2020.

Services offered by the Southern Nevada Community Health Care Centers will include:

- Family Planning
- Sexual Health Clinic
- Ryan White/HIV Services
- Refugee Services
- Primary Care Clinic
- Pharmacy
- Dental Health Clinic
- Behavioral Health Services

Fast Track Nevada - Ending the HIV Epidemic

The Southern Nevada Health District hosted a Fast-Track Cities event at its main location on World AIDS Day, Sunday, December 1. Local and state officials in attendance to sign [the Paris Declaration](#) included:

- City of Las Vegas Council member and Southern Nevada District Board of Health member, Brian Knudsen
- City of Henderson Mayor Debra March
- Boulder City Mayor Kiernan McManus
- Boulder City Mayor Pro Tem and Southern Nevada Health District Board of Health member James Howard Adams
- Congresswoman Dina Titus

The Paris Declaration calls on cities to strengthen their local HIV/AIDS response and pledge their support to ensure that:

- 90% of people living with HIV know their HIV status
- 90% of people living with HIV who know their HIV-positive status are on antiretroviral therapy (ART)
- 90% of people living with HIV on ART are achieving viral suppression

The initiative's fourth target is to reduce the negative impact of discrimination and stigma to zero and is an equally important goal. More information on Fast-Track Cities is available [here](#).

This event marked the first time an entire state has committed to the Fast-Track initiative in the United States. This remarkable achievement was possible because of the commitment of local, state, federal, and international partners.

Hepatitis A Outbreak

In June, the Health District declared an outbreak of acute hepatitis A in Clark County. Since November 2018, the Health District has reported 99 outbreak-associated cases of hepatitis A. One person has died. Of the reported cases, more than 89 percent were among those who used drugs (injection or non-injection), and more than 74 percent were among those experiencing homelessness. Eighty-six percent had been hospitalized. The weekly number of cases reported have continued to decline, therefore, the Health District recently demobilized its Incident Command Structure that had been implemented to lead the response to this event. This outbreak has not been declared over, since it has not reached the required number minimum number of reported cases required by the CDC for a specific time period. Health District staff members will continue to be involved with the hepatitis A outbreak response as part of their usual duties, such as immunization outreach and disease surveillance activities.

The Health District continues to remind the public and its health care partners that hepatitis A vaccination is the best prevention against the virus. Since the outbreak announcement, the Health District has administered 3,384 hepatitis A vaccinations to adults ages 18 and older. A total of 6,295 hepatitis A vaccinations have been administered to adults by all providers in Clark County as of December 9. The Health District continues to recommend that health care workers review their immunization history to ensure staff who may be caring for ill patients are up to date with their hepatitis A vaccinations. Pre-vaccination serologic testing is not required for the vaccine to be administered.

Weekly hepatitis A outbreak reports and additional resources are available on the Health District's website at www.SNHD.info/hep-a-control.

Community Meetings

Month of November:

- Participated in the STI Express Community of Practice Monthly Call
- Participated in the FQHC Technical Visit Preparation meeting
- Met with Bristol Ellington and Brian Podmenik, City of Henderson, regarding matters related to the Health District
- Participated in the Legislative Committee on Health Care meeting
- Participated in the Nevada State Medical Association Public Health Commission meeting
- Met with Richard Whitley, DHHS Director and other staff regarding HRSA funding and other collaborative efforts
- Provided media interviews as requested
- Met with Julia Peek to plan for the Interim Healthcare Committee presentation
- Attended the Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) Orientation in Washington, DC with Councilman Brian Knudsen (Board of Health Member)
- Participated in the Graduate Medical Education Committee (GMEC) Summit
- Participated in the Nevada State Medical Association Council meeting
- Participated in the Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC) Monthly Member call